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PAGE 001

NOV 84

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19 DIRECTUR PRIUMITY LATIN AMERICA BRIEF

FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

CONTENTS

- 1.
- 2.
- CHILE: MOUNTING OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT CRACKDOWN

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SECRET

PAGE 002 TOT: 19 NOV 34

DIRECTOR

PAGE 003 TOT: 19 NOV 84

DIRECTOR

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NOV 84 DIRECTOR

3. CHILE: MOUNTING OPPOSITION TO GOVERNMENT CRACKDOWN

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//CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP FRESNO YESTERDAY RELEASED A PASTORAL LETTER STRONGLY CONDEMNING THE STATE OF SIEGE AND URGING PARTICIPATION IN THE CHURCH-SPONSORED NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER ON 23 NOVEMBER.

HE IS INCREASINGLY DISENCHANTED WITH MINISTER OF INTERIOR JARPA, WHO HAS CRITICIZED CHURCH OFFICIALS. MEANWHILE, OPPOSITION CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC LEADERS VISITED 4 SLUM RECENTLY RAIDED BY GOVERNMENT TROOPS TO ENCOURAGE SUPPORT FOR ANTIREGIME DEMONSTRATIONS ON 27 AND 28 NOVEMBER. THE TERRORIST ARM OF THE CHILEAN COMMUNIST PARTY REPORTEDLY IS PREPARING TO STEP UP ACTIVITIES BY DISTRIBUTING HOMEMADE GRENADES IN SANTIAGO.//

COMMENT: THE PASTORAL LETTER WILL FURTHER DAMAGE THE CHURCH'S

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PAGE 004

TOT: 19

NOV 84

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RELATIONS WITH THE PINOCHET REGIME. AS WILL THE GROWING DISTANCE SETWEN THE ARCHBISHOP AND JARPA--THE GOVERNMENT'S LEADING MODERATE. THE GOVERNMENT SO FAR HAS ACTED PRIMARILY AGAINST SUSPECTED LEFTIST AGITATORS. BUT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS RISK PROVOKING PINOCHET IF THEY TOO OBVIOUSLY ORGANIZE ANTIREGIME PROTESTS. AN INCREASE IN TERRORIST VIOLENCE WOULD CAUSE THE GOVERNMENT TO PROLONG THE STATE OF SIEGE.

END OF MESSAGE

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